

"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." – Martin Luther

Country Journal

Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns

Becket, Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Otis, Plainfield, Russell, Sandisfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Worthington

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HUNTINGTON

Dr. Purdy named CEO of Hilltown Community Health Center

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

With a background that included a childhood in rural Ohio, prior work at Federally Qualified Community Health Centers throughout the country and spending the past thirteen years at the Hilltown Community Health Centers, the HCHC Board of Directors has appointed Dr. Michael Purdy as their new Chief Executive Officer.

Purdy has worked for HCHC since 2010, establishing the Center's optometry department and creating an optometry program at the Gateway School-Based Health Center. In 2013, Purdy was named HCHC's Clinical Director and in August, 2023 became the Interim Chief Executive Officer with the resignation of former CEO Eliza Lake.

According to HCHC President Lee Manchester, the Board worked with Zurick Davis, a healthcare search firm based in Boston. "We interviewed several excellent candidates, but what stood out in Michael's



Dr. Michael Purdy, Chief Executive Officer of Hilltown Community Health Centers, Inc.
Turley photo by Wendy Long

DR. PURDY, page 2

BLANDFORD

Funeral procession makes way to Pittsfield

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The funeral procession honoring U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant Jacob Galliher, who was killed last month in a training exercise off the coast of Japan, made its way through Blandford to Pittsfield late Saturday afternoon on the Mass Turnpike.

Honoring the fallen soldier, members of the Blandford Volunteer Fire Department dressed in red coats or firefighting gear. The firefighters were assigned to fire trucks and were stationed at the North Street and Old Chester Road Mass Turnpike overpasses.

On the North Street bridge members of the Russell and Huntington Fire Departments joined Blandford with Chester/Blandford Police Chief Jennifer Dubiel.

On the Old Chester Road bridge, Chester Fire Department joined Blandford firefighters with Chester/Blandford Police Officer Jim Grzelak.

The procession ended in Pittsfield at the Dery Funeral Home.

BLANDFORD

Select Board interview third Town Administrator candidate

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

The Select Board at Monday night's meeting voted to offer the Town Administrator position to Jessie Permar Kelly of

Hadley.

While she did not have a lot of experience with creating an annual budget, Chair Cara Letendre said she believed Kelly had enough experience to pick up on a municipal budget "really

quickly." The added experience of managing federal grants "is a bonus for us," Letendre said.

"She is highly intelligent, friendly, sociable, well spoken and confident," said Letendre and the consensus

was that she is competent and would represent the town in a "very professional manner."

Board member Jeff Allen, who participated

SELECT BOARD, page 2



Water covers Blair Road over the cement block culvert during Monday's storm.
Submitted photos



This photo is at the beginning of Blair Road from North Blandford Road.



Water gushes in Peebles Brook alongside Beech Hill Road.

BABY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

PAGE 3

Blandford.....2	Florence5	Opinion.....4	Schools & Youth.....9
Business Directory.....3	Goshen8	Otis.....5	Wedding Announcement .7
Chester.....7	Hilltowns3	Pittsfield10	Westfield6
Chesterfield6	Middlefield.....5	Public Notices.....10	Williamsburg.....3
Classifieds.....11	Northampton10	Puzzle Page.....9	



BLANDFORD

BLANDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOLDS OPEN HOUSE



Dan McCarthy, a Springfield Naturalist Club rock hound is inspecting a stone found on the edge of the North Street road leading to the White Church.



The rock that caught Dan McCarthy's interest may be a bit of petrified root.
Submitted photos



Ann and George Reichert and Historical Society Board Member Peter Langmore, shows them inspecting some of the second floor museum's recent improvements.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT



Brent Chadwick, accompanist, listens as Pastor Ciprian Droma reads the biblical passages associated with the music presented at the Christmas Concert at the First Congregational Church of Blandford Saturday evening. *Turley photo by Steve Hart*

SELECT BOARD

from page 1

ed remotely, asked about references and Interim Town Administrator Ira Brezinsky will do that.

The board voted to offer the job to Kelly contingent on references and successful contract negotiations. Allen agreed to this before he left the meeting and told the board they could go ahead with the executive session to discuss salary/contract negotiations. Allen was at home with a cold.

Returning a message meant for Brezinsky, Kelly said "This is such great news, very exciting," and she would send reference contact information.

The board then voted to go into executive session not to return to open session.

ACO vehicle

The discussion of what to do with the Animal Control Vehicle continued.

The board agreed that if Chester wants to buy the Animal Control Vehicle that would be acceptable. There is a cracked windshield that must be repaired at an \$800 cost.

Culvert extension

In other business, Ron Pelletier of 22 Herrick Road appealed to the Select Board to have the Highway Department install more lengths of culvert to eliminate a ditch across the front of his property. Pelletier installed a culvert under his driveway to divert water and the town did add two more lengths of pipe and Pelletier believes the town should

finish the job to the end of his property. However, putting in additional pipe would locate them directly on his property, no longer in the 40-foot-wide roadway right-of-way according to Highway Superintendent David Waldron.

Letendre said it was not possible for the town to spend public money on private property. Putting stone in the ditch would slow down the water and make it possible to flow on across the property to the conservation area.

Pelletier said, "I'll have to do it myself. I thought I'd appeal to the town to fix it the right way. I don't like stone."

Drainage issues

Water was the primary issue for all

of the Highway Department's Monday efforts. Drainage was monitored on several roads and North Blandford Road was closed for a while during the day with major drainage problems.

Shepard, Kaolin, Hayden, Cobble Mountain roads all had water problems as did Maple Lane. Blair Road was flooded 100 to 150-feet from the North Blandford Road side and, according to Waldron, there was two to three feet of water covering the box culvert there.

Beavers apparently contributed to the problem.

Huntington Road also had about 1.5 feet of water on it just past the transfer station at the bottom of the hill. Most of the issues were storm related.

HUNTINGTON

DR. PURDY

from page 1

experience was a twenty-year commitment to working in federally qualified community health centers, working in both clinical and administrative capacity," Manchester said. "Additionally, we were impressed by his interest in shifting to a primarily administrative focus, as evidenced by his completion of a Masters in Public Health at UMASS in 2019, as well as his recent administrative work at HCHC as our Interim CEO."

Manchester added, "The combination of clinical and administrative background and skills was a rare combination among our candidates, and we felt that it would serve the organization well." Manchester also noted that Purdy's candidacy was "enthusiastically supported by other leaders within the organization, which speaks to the high regard he has already earned from his colleagues."

Purdy grew up in a very traditional family on a grain farm in Ohio. As such, his parents picked which college he could attend and he started his academic journey at Mt. Vernon Nazarene University in Mount Vernon, Ohio. From there, he attended the New England College of Optometry in Boston. Upon graduation, he moved to Alabama, which allowed new clinicians to practice while waiting for their Boards to come in. "When you graduate, you're so focused on the money that you owe back," Purdy recalled. He stayed for a year, then returned to Boston for a residency at Dimock Community Health Center where he had previously worked as a student. While there, he also joined the teaching faculty at his alma mater.

Purdy moved to New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. The city lacked health care professionals, overall.

He secured a grant from the Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat Foundation and opened an eye clinic in the city's Federally Qualified Health Center, where he remained for two years. After experiencing his second hurricane, Purdy was ready to leave that region and went to Arizona to provide eye care with Indian Health Services for a year, before returning to New England.

He had originally intended to move back to Boston but was intrigued by a position posted at HCHC for someone to start eye care services. Purdy secured the position in 2010, serving as HCHC's first eye doctor.

"It was really quite remarkable to see the spaces between houses, after living in Boston," Purdy recalled, adding that he quickly grew to like Western Massachusetts.

Purdy says that the most gratifying part of his career at HCHC is working to overcome the nature and types of barriers to health care seen in rural Western Massachusetts. "Wherever I've worked, there have always been barriers. This feels very much like what I grew up with in Ohio, although I think we had easier access to medical care. The barriers here are kind of concrete and harder to overcome, such as transportation to a hospital. Language is a difficult barrier to overcome but we've figured that out. But out here, someone under Health Safety Net has to go to Worcester for hospital care. Again, that's a very hard barrier to overcome."

"I think that when you take the poverty piece out of it, and just look at barriers, it's clear that this region needs a FQHC," Purdy concluded.

When asked if he'd ever imagined himself at the helm of a community health center, Purdy shook his head vehemently, "I did not see this being the trajectory for my career." For a time, he thought he'd stay in academics, but was also pulled by his work in New Orleans, which he also found gratifying. "But once I did land here, it felt like home." And home it is, for Purdy, his husband and their four children, ages 5, 9, 12 and 14.

One characteristic that Purdy has always enjoyed about HCHC is the collaborative work that takes place. It was not unusual, he said, to run upstairs and consult with a medical provider over a patient. Purdy said the culture of the agency promoted collaboration and integrated care before that became the norm in the medical field.

Purdy is realistic about the challenges on the horizon for FQHCs like Hilltown. "I think all FQHC's are going to face financial challenges going forward, which will be further compounded for us by our rural nature," he said, adding that HCHC enjoyed additional funding through the COVID years that will dissipate soon.

What has always been true for HCHC is that it is a difficult area to recruit and maintain providers. The organization is attuned to developing strategies to keep staff and providers from burning out, which Purdy admits is a difficult task.

"I really do think that what's unique about this health center is the comradery between the staff and providers. The staff are really valued, they're part of the team. The collaboration is really astounding," Purdy said.

He also credits the dedication of a strong Board, which he says is really involved at HCHC. He added that many community health centers struggle to get a quorum for meetings. "Everybody (on our board) wants the health center to be successful," Purdy said. "This is a community effort."

Health care in the region grew out of a tradition of home-based nursing care in the early 1900's, established by the American Red Cross. While this care was originally coordinated by a town nurse, over the decades medical services grew until the Worthington Health Center became a Federally Qualified Community Health Center in 1976 to provide medical, dental and mental health services regardless of ability to pay. As demand grew, the organization expanded to establish a site in Huntington for the southern hilltowns; by 1988, the current site on route 20 was built and opened, with the organization changing its name to Hilltown Community Health Centers, Inc. Ten years later, the organization worked with its local regional school district to establish the Gateway School-Based Health Center. HCHC also took the helm of the Hilltown Family Center (previously social services center) in Huntington, which was necessitated by the closure of its funding agent. In 2018, HCHC expanded again by opening the John P. Musante Health Center in Amherst.

Today, the Hilltown Community Health Center provides medical, dental, optometry, behavioral health, physical therapy, substance abuse treatment, laboratory services and community support programs to the region.

HILLTOWNS

Local towns receive Fair Share awards

BOSTON – The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced it is delivering a total of \$100 million to the state’s 351 cities and towns to support local infrastructure.

The awards come from revenue generated by the Fair Share Amendment. The following towns recently received fair share funds from the state to help support local infrastructure projects.

Locally, they included: Becket \$93,860 road miles and \$58,557 Chapter 90 for a total of \$152,417; Blandford \$106,602 road miles and \$64,458 Chapter 90 for a total of \$171,060; Chester \$94,509 road miles and \$57,240 and Chapter 90 for a total of \$151,749; Chesterfield \$88,266 road miles and \$53,777 Chapter 90 for a total of \$142,043; Cummington \$80,555 road miles and \$49,053 Chapter 90 for a total of \$129,608; Goshen \$41,424 road miles and \$26,067 Chapter 90 for a total of \$67,491; Huntington \$60,854 road miles and \$39,868 Chapter 90 for a total of \$100,722; Middlefield \$63,742 road miles and \$37,886 Chapter 90 for a total of \$101,628; Montgomery \$50,604 road miles and \$30,838 Chapter 90 for a total of \$81,442; Otis \$69,744 road miles and \$44,428 Chapter 90 for a total of \$114,172; Plainfield \$78,685 road miles and \$47,201 Chapter 90 for a total of \$125,886; Russell \$37,142 road miles and \$24,551 Chapter 90 for a total of \$61,693; Sandisfield \$134,694 road miles and \$80,484 Chapter 90 for a total of \$215,178; Westhampton \$72,896 road miles and \$45,962 Chapter 90 for a total of \$118,858; Williamsburg \$,70,798 road miles and \$46,700 Chapter 90 for a total of \$117,498 and Worthington \$95,774 road miles and \$58,145 Chapter 90 for a total of \$153,919.

Letters have been sent to each municipality certifying that community’s Fair Share apportionment for Fiscal Year 2024. The Fair Share Amendment funds are being distributed according to two formulas. The first \$50 million is being distributed using the traditional Chapter 90 formula based on local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment (20.83%). The second \$50 million is being distributed using a formula based on each municipality’s share of road mileage.

This apportionment is automatically incorporated into a municipalities’ existing Chapter 90 contract with MassDOT with no further action required by the municipality. Apportionments for all communities are available online by visiting www.mass.gov/chapter-90-program.

Communities may use Fair Share revenue for construction, preservation, and improvement projects that create or extend the life of capital facilities. This includes costs for highway projects and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Projects that are eligible would include installing sidewalks, bicycle lanes, new pavement, sidewalks, retaining walks, crossing signals and other transportation infrastructure features.

WILLIAMSBURG

Hike to Petticoat Hill takes place Dec. 23

WILLIAMSBURG – On Saturday, Dec. 23 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. people may explore the fauna and flora of Petticoat Hill, a property managed by The Trustees of Reservation in Williamsburg.

Aimee Gelinas, Director of the Tamarack Hollow Nature and Cultural Center, lead a roundtrip 2 plus mile hike to learn about the fauna, tracks, signs of wildlife and flora, winter tree ID and evergreen plants plus a stunning stand of American Beech trees, rocky outcrops, varied habitats and historical folklore.

This will be a hike or snowshoe depending on trail conditions with some hills and rocky areas. The hike is free, but donations are accepted. The hike is supported in part by a grant from the Williamsburg Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. Registration is required by email aimee@gaiaroots.com. For more information, people may visit www.tamarackhollow.org.



Raelynn Brown

July 20, 2023

Parents: Ryan & Ashley Brown, Hampden
Grandparents: Art & Lynn Anderson, Wilbraham
Rick & Joanne Brown, Monson



Lainey Whitaker

September 27, 2023

Parents: Chris & Lindsey Whitaker, Huntington
Grandparents: Chip & Tracy Dazelle, Huntington
Bob & Maura Bellamy, Westfield



Nobody dreams of having multiple sclerosis

Some dreams are universal: hitting a ball over the Green Monster; winning the World Series with a grand slam in the bottom of the ninth inning. Finding out you have MS is not one of them.

Multiple sclerosis is a devastating disease of the central nervous system where the body's immune system attacks the insulation surrounding the nerves. It strikes adults in the prime of life - and changes lives forever.

To help make the dream of ending MS come true, call 1-800-FIGHT MS or visit us online at nationalmsscociety.org.



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OPINION

EDITORIAL



Cookies made with a familiar herb

fresh in a number of culinary delights. When the plant goes to seed, known as Coriander, it can be used in that stage as well, eaten whole, crushed or powdered.

I liken cilantro to being the “marigold” of the herb world. Either you love the smell/taste of it or you hate it.

I, for one, immensely dislike it and if given the chance to pick it out of my salsa I will certainly do it! Even in a restaurant.

I found it interesting to learn that some people possess a genetically predisposed aversion to it, according to studies by Charles J. Wysocki of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia. To me it has a bitter taste that I have a hard time describing beyond that. Dirty? Soil-like?

Most people that do dislike it have a similar lack of descriptive ability; they just can't put their finger on it, but they don't like the taste...or the smell of it. It's funny that when my oldest daughter received her Ancestry DNA results, she was shown not to possess the genetic aversion. Well, she didn't get that from me.

Cilantro is often used in salsa and other Mexican, Asian and Italian dishes including curries, sauces, salads and soups. If you prefer to grow the plant more for its greens and less for its seeds, manage it as you would spinach.

Sow seeds in the ground in the cool of the season and in succession every two weeks. It dislikes being transplanted but doesn't mind pot culture.

Harvest greens rather aggressively – about one-third of the plant at a time. Just like spinach, there are slow-to-bolt varieties to choose from such as aptly named “Slow Bolt” and “Longstanding”. Cilantro's flowers are edible, and they attract lots of beneficial insects such

as lady beetles, parasitic wasps and syrphid flies.

Coriander seeds, on the other hand, have a pleasant (at least to me) fragrance once dried. The scent is easier to pin-point too; nutty and spicy (ever so slightly) come to mind.

Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits, herbal liqueurs and Christmas cookies as I have come to find out and favor!

The Herb Society noted that during World War II coriander seeds were coated in white or pink sugar and thrown from carnival wagons, earning the name “confections” or “confetti.” When the seeds were replaced by balls of colored paper the name confetti stuck.

Take this one to your next game of Cruise Ship Trivia!

It is easy to harvest the seeds. Simply let the heads dry to brown right on the plant. Clip them and place inside a paper bag; as they dry further, they will open, and the seeds will pop out.

Even if you are only interested in harvesting the seeds, multiple plantings (or a big garden patch) are necessary to get a decent-sized harvest. Let a few drop their seeds and you will be blessed with a few self-sown plants next spring.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

This weekend was supposed to be the weekend when all four of us partook in a cookie-making marathon.

Usually, we start baking right after Thanksgiving, but this year the kids were involved in a play, then a concert, and alas, there was no time. We started out strong yesterday and then I began to feel a little funny.

By midafternoon I was definitely under the weather and that was it for my cookie-making. We got two batches in before I left the kitchen.

One is an almond covered thumb print, and the second is a coriander cookie – one of my all-time favorites. It must have been a favorite to a few other folks along the line because the recipe dates back to the early 19th century!

I tried them for the first time at Old Sturbridge Village's Christmas by Candlelight some years back and making them has been a tradition in our house ever since. Why don't we take this opportunity to learn about a very versatile plant.

Most gardeners already know that Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) is one of the few herbs that goes by two different names depending on the part of the plant used.

Its foliage, known as Cilantro, is used

I'm 65 and working; can I collect ex-spouse benefits?



Dear Rusty

I turned 65 earlier this year and I still work full time.

I was divorced four years ago after 38 years of marriage, but my ex-husband has been collecting Social Security for at least 10 years now. Can I start collecting Social Security and still work full time? And can I collect my ex-husband's amount if it is more than mine and what is the best way to achieve this? When I went to my local SSA office, they said they had no way of knowing that.

Signed Working Divorcee

Dear Working Divorcee

Although you are eligible to claim Social Security at age 65, because you are working full time you may wish to wait a bit longer to do so. That's because Social Security has an “earnings test” which applies to anyone who collects benefits before Full Retirement Age and you have not yet reached yours.

The earnings test imposes a limit on how much you can earn before SS takes away some of your benefits. If you exceed the annual earnings limit (\$22,320 for 2024), Social Security will want back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit and you will need to repay that, usually by having future benefits withheld. If you significantly exceed the limit, you may even be temporarily ineligible to receive SS benefits until you either earn less or reach your full retirement age (FRA) of 66 years and 8 months.

So, if your earnings from working will significantly exceed the annual earnings limit, which changes yearly, it's likely that your wisest move would be to wait longer to claim your Social Security. As a bonus for doing so, your monthly payment will have grown and will be higher when you claim later. The earnings test no longer applies after you reach FRA.

Regarding benefits from your ex-husband, you cannot collect his instead of yours. What you may be able to do, when you claim your own benefit, is to get an additional amount, which brings your monthly payment up to 50% of his. In order for that to happen, you would need to satisfy the following criteria:

You are not currently married.

The personal benefit you are entitled to at your FRA must be less than 50% of your ex-husband's FRA entitlement.

If the above are true, when you claim your own SS retirement benefit you will also get a “spousal boost” to bring your payment up to what you're entitled to as an ex-spouse. The amount of the spousal boost, if you claim Social Security at your FRA, will be the difference between half of his FRA entitlement and your FRA entitlement. If you claim your benefit before your FRA, not only will your own benefit be reduced for claiming early, but the amount of your spousal boost will also be reduced. Benefits claimed before FRA are always reduced.

Whenever you decide to claim Social Security, you will be automatically deemed to be filing for benefits from your ex-husband as well (you shouldn't need to apply separately). You've already satisfied the basic criteria of at least 10 years married to get benefits from an ex-spouse and, if you satisfy the above criteria as well, you will be entitled to a spousal boost when you claim.

But your current earnings from working full time will likely affect your eligibility to collect Social Security benefits at this time, so waiting until your full retirement age to claim may be your best choice.

If you will only slightly exceed the annual earnings limit you can consider claiming earlier, as long as you are comfortable with receiving a permanently reduced amount, and the prospect of not getting benefits for a number of months if you exceed the earnings limit, the number of months you will go without benefits depends on how much you exceed the limit by.

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FLORENCE

Andrew Sullivan named VP/commercial lender

FLORENCE – Andrew Sullivan of Wilbraham has joined the staff as vice president/commercial lender at Florence Bank.



Andrew Sullivan

He began his banking career as a credit analyst at a mutual bank in the region, but soon discovered an affinity for relationship building and helping commercial customers achieve their goals. Prior to joining Florence Bank, he served as a portfolio manager, small business loan officer and commercial loan officer.

Sullivan began his new role at Florence Bank in mid-October. "I like the challenge of meeting customer expectations, all while staying within our bank policy guidelines and adapting to the ever-changing economic environment," he said.

"Our commercial lenders, credit analysts, and support staff members work seamlessly to provide our business customers with the best possi-

ble banking experience," Sullivan said. "I appreciate the team atmosphere at Florence Bank."

The founder of the Andrew Sullivan Swing For a Cure Golf Tournament, which benefits the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Sullivan holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and business management and a master of business administration from Elms College. Sullivan is the chairman of the West of the River Chamber of Commerce. He is married to Amanda Sullivan and likes to fish and golf in his spare time.

Florence Bank is a mutual savings bank chartered in 1873. Currently, the bank serves the Pioneer Valley through 12 full-service branch locations in Florence, Northampton, Easthampton, Williamsburg, Amherst, Hadley, Belchertown, Granby, Chicopee, West Springfield and Springfield.

MIDDLEFIELD

Council on Aging lists menu

MIDDLEFIELD – The Middlefield Senior Center, 169 Skyline Trail, on Wednesday, Dec. 27 will serve lunch at noon. The menu is eat in or take out. The choice is chicken

stew or baked ziti, garlic green beans and carrots, French bread and fresh fruit. People should call 413-623-9990 to reserve a meal the previous Friday, Dec. 12. Suggested donation is \$3.

OTIS

Foot care nurse retires

FootCare by Nurses to provide foot care service

OTIS – Jane Kelly, the traveling foot nurse has retired.

After a 30 year career caring for the elderly feet of many hill towns, Kelly is retiring. We are saddened to say goodbye. The Otis Council on Aging wishes Kelly a happy and long retirement.

Foot Care by Nurses will now provide foot care services. The Otis COA is now accepting appointments for Monday, Jan. 8. Services are provided the second Monday of the month, unless otherwise noted from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the Otis Council on Aging, One North Main Road.

People may call either Eila Bell and/or Kendra Rybacki at 413-269-0100, extension 5 to make an appointment, which must be made in advance. All are welcome to participate.

Cost to patient is \$30 for Otis residents and \$55 for non-residents. All payments should be made out to the Otis Council on Aging at the time of service. Home visits are available for \$95.

With their holistic approach to foot care and stress relief, Foot Care by Nurses witnessed a dramatic improvement in consumers balance and overall well-being on numerous occasions.



After 30 year of caring for feet in many hill towns, Jane Kelly is retiring.

Turley photo by Eila Bell

Town clerk lists holiday schedule

OTIS – The Town Clerk's office will be closed Monday, Dec. 25 through Monday, Jan. 1, 2024.

Anyone coming to the Town Hall for business during the week between

Christmas and New Year's should call 413-269-0100 as offices have varying schedules.

There will be no Select Board meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 26.

HILLTOWN HISTORY

Rudolph story was department store promotion

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Who hasn't seen the show Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer? This blockbuster Christmas show has the themes of acceptance, tolerance and perseverance overcoming adversity all embedded in a show children love. It remains an extraordinarily popular show 94 years after it was first released. Well this is the back story of it.

Robert L. May wrote the story for Montgomery Ward's Department Store. It was to be given out free to customers shopping with children at Christmas time in 1939. Can you imagine, shop with a child at Christmas or have the only child, who doesn't have the book Rudolph

What a dilemma. Robert May was 35 years old and a copy editor for Montgomery Ward Department Store in Chicago. There were 600 Montgomery Ward stores across America, only Sears department store came close to rivaling them.

Macy's department store had given away free coloring books in past Christmases. So the game was afoot. No one was more surprised than Montgomery Ward by how popular Rudolph became that Christmas, giving away 2.4 million copies of the booklet. One can only wonder what that did to sales? Robert May had lost his wife to cancer while he was writing this story. Was it the four year old daughter he was left to raise alone that propelled him to write an uplifting story? This daughter remembers going to Lincoln Park Zoo with her dad to study and sketch reindeer. He claimed she was his critic while writing the story.

The illustrations were done by Denver Gillen, a commercial artist

employed by Montgomery Ward. He certainly captured the right image for Rudolph because it endured throughout all its renditions. Gillen went on to become the chief illustrator for Reader's Digest.

Robert May continued to work as a publicist for Montgomery Ward. Due to the war time paper shortage, there was no further publication of Rudolph until 1946. That Christmas the Department store once again gave away free copies of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer to the tune of six million copies.

The story was adapted to become a song in 1949 by Johnny Marks, a well known composer and radio producer at the time. He also happened to be Robert May's brother-in-law. It was the singing cowboy Gene Autry, who made it an instant success on the radio, selling almost two million copies of the record on its release. Since then it has been sung by Bing Crosby, Dolly Parton, Chuck Berry, Ray Charles, Ringo Starr, Jackson Five, the rapper DMX, Harry Connick Jr., Destiny's Child and more, not to mention every children's chorus.

Next there was an animated television feature that was produced in 1948. Everyone watched it on the television sets displayed in the window at Montgomery Ward's. This was the short Christmas special you baby boomers watched.

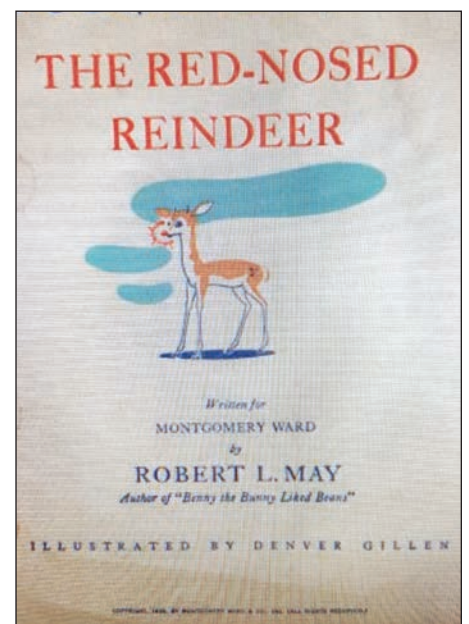
Then the children's socks were really knocked off with the 1964 version narrated by Burl Ives. This story added the characters of Clarice, Rudolph's honey, the Elf Dentist, Abominable Snowman, Yukon Jack and the Misfit toys.

That became the blockbuster we all know and love today. This film was notable for being the first time a 3D effect was created by posing three dimensional toy dolls to act out the show in



Robert May, author of the tale "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" is shown circa 1948.

Submitted photos



The original booklet, "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" was first printed in 1939 and given to children, who shopped with their parents at Montgomery Ward Department Stores.

reindeer with her beacon red nose.

Every year in December Robert May displayed a 6 foot papier mache Rudolph outside his Evanston, Illinois home. People flocked to take photos of it and their beloved author. May had six children and remarried twice. He died in 1976 at the age of 71 years. He left his body of work with Dartmouth College where he was an alum, along with Theodor Geisel (aka Dr. Seuss, who wrote "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" two years after Rudolph was published.

So accept who you are, find the good in everyone and persevere in doing acts of kindness this Christmas season. Pass on the spirit of the Season.

WESTFIELD

Westfield Bank donates food to local communities



Shown from left are Vice President/Branch Manager, Sherleen Crespo; Branch Manager, Mirna Grbesic; Branch Manager, Ken Fontanez; Branch Manager, Greg Musante; Branch Manager, Amanda Sarrasin; Branch Manager, Brian Fontaine and Mayor of Chicopee, John Vieau. *Turley submitted photo*

WESTFIELD – Westfield Bank invited its customers and community members across Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut to help fight hunger in local communities as part of the 2023 food drive.

From Wednesday, Oct. 25 through Saturday, Nov. 18, all Westfield Bank branches collected non-perishable food items and monetary donations. Food items included items for Thanksgiving meals, including canned fruit, boxed stuffing and potatoes, gravy, jelly, cranberry sauce and more. Each branch donated to a food pantry or community kitchen local to their service area. Some of the branch managers gathered to cook for a local soup kitchen with the donated food items, donating a total of 126 pounds of food, which would be able to feed about 100 people that day.

“Giving back to our local communities is a crucial part of our mission. That is why we are happy to partner with local food banks by running a food drive at our branches prior to the holiday season,” said James C. Hagan, President and CEO of Westfield Bank.

Currently, the Bank has twenty-five branch offices, fifty-four ATMs and an additional thirty-one seasonal ATMs and serves Hampden and Hampshire counties in Western Massachusetts and Hartford and Tolland counties in Northern Connecticut.

CHESTERFIELD

HIKING THE TRUSTEE OWNED CHESTERFIELD GORGE



A view of Chesterfield Gorge and the East Branch of the Westfield River during a recent hike.



The Chesterfield Gorge has rock formations. *Turley photos by Deborah Daniels*



A sign showing the East Branch Trail on Trustee of the Reservation owned Chesterfield Gorge.

Chesterfield Church holds Christmas bake sale

CHESTERFIELD – The Chesterfield Congregational Church, Route 143, will hold its third annual Christmas bake sale on Saturday, Dec. 23 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and on Sunday, Dec. 24 from 1-4 p.m.

There will be a huge array of items including fancy cakes, pies, coffee cakes, cookie platters of various sizes and assortments, breads including sour-dough loaves, English muffin and various quick breads, whoopie pies including chocolate with peppermint filling and chocolate chip with fudge filling, regular and gluten-free cookie boxes, fruit, vegetable and Outlook Farm sausage casseroles, white chocolate bark, blond brownies and chocolate surprise center brownies, individual ginger bread/cranberry and chocolate/strawberry trifle cups and many other items.

This will be a great chance to purchase all the holiday baked items by coming early to the bake sale. All proceeds will benefit the church.

WE CARRY A WIDE VARIETY OF FROZEN TURKEYS, TURKEY BREAST, DUCKS, GEESE, CORNISH HENS AS WELL AS FRESH HAMS & RED MEAT ROAST FOR YOUR HOLIDAY NEEDS!

<p>HOLIDAY FAVORITES</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH PORK CROWN ROAST... \$3⁹⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH STORE MADE HOLIDAY ROAST BONELESS PORK LOIN STUFFED WITH HAM, CHEESE, PEPPERS, OLIVES, SPICES \$4⁴⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH SMOKED PORK SHOULDER \$2⁴⁹ lb</p> <p>HOLIDAY HAMS</p> <p>USDA INSP. KAYEM BUDDA BALL BONELESS SMOKED PIT HAM \$3⁴⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN SKINLESS & SHANKLESS HATFIELD OLDTIME HARDWOOD SMOKED WHOLE HAM \$2⁴⁴ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN 1/2 SPIRAL HAM..... \$1²⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN HAM PORTIONS..... 99¢ lb</p> <p>SCAN TO PLACE YOUR CHRISTMAS ORDER ></p>	<p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN RIBEYE FOR STANDING ROAST CUT FREE \$8⁸⁸ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TENDERLOIN CUT FREE \$9⁸⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF SIRLOIN SPOON ROAST \$5⁹⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH AMERICAN LAMB LEGS \$3⁹⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH IMPORTED LAMB RACKS \$15⁹⁹ lb</p>	<p>USDA INSP. FRESH HOTEL TURKEY BREAST \$1⁹⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN WHOLE TURKEYS 99¢ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN CAPONS \$5⁹⁹ lb</p> <p>HOLIDAY APPETIZERS</p> <p>USDA INSP. CHICOPEE PROVISIONS BLUE SEAL KIELBASA \$4⁹⁹ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. YANKEE TRADER CRAB RANGOON 11 OZ BOX \$4⁹⁹ ea</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN CODINO'S MANICOTTI W/ RICOTTA 4 OZ PAK \$4⁹⁹ ea</p> <p>USDA INSP. YANKEE TRADER SCALLOP WRAPPED IN BACON 10 PCS BOX \$7⁹⁹ ea</p> <p>USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN COOKED SHRIMP JUMBO 16/20 CT, 2 LB BAG \$17⁹⁹ ea</p> <p>HOURS: Mon. - Wed. 8-4 • Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3 SALE DATES: 12/21/23 - 12/27/23 • OPEN 12/24 8AM-1PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">90 Meat Outlet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">90 Avocado St. Springfield</p> <p style="text-align: center;">413-737-1288</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.90meat.com</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">We reserve the right to limit quantities.</p>
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CHESTER

Chester Baptist Church lists Christmas services

CHESTER – The Chester Baptist Church, 14 Middlefield Road, located across the Town Hall, invites the community to celebrate the blessings of Christmas during these upcoming special services.

On Saturday, Dec. 23 at 6:30 p.m. a Christmas Candlelight service will feature traditional Christmas favorites,

a children’s program and message by Pastor Dan Herr. Following the service there will be a time of fellowship and refreshments.

On Sunday, Dec. 24 please join us for Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. followed by a Christmas service at 10:45 a.m. For more information, people may call Pastor Dan Herr at 413-668-7768.

Group hike to be held on Jan. 1

CHESTER – The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers will hold a First Day hike at Sanderson Brook Falls on Monday, Jan. 1, 2024 at 10 a.m.

This is an easy to moderate hike with some uneven footing and two miles in and back. Parking at the Sanderson Brook Falls lot on Route 20, 631 US Route 20 across from Bannish Lumber in Chester.

Participants will celebrate the New Year 2024 outdoors with the Hilltown Hikers and the Department of Conservation and Recreation to join the nationwide initiative led by America’s State Parks to encourage people to get outdoors. On New Year’s Day, hundreds of free, guided hikes will be organized in all 50 states. Hikers across America will be participating in First Day Hikes, getting their hearts pumping and enjoying the beauty of a state park.

Last year nearly 55,000 people rang in the New Year, hiking over 133,000 miles throughout the country. The Chester Blandford State Forest includes

remnants of small mining operations and the 60-foot cascade at Sanderson Brook Falls. The state forest was established in 1924 when local lumber companies sold the land to the state.

The trail is gravel and wide, which gently climbs upward. Participants will cross three girder bridges and follow along Sanderson Brook then take the more narrow trail to the right, which takes them to the bottom of the waterfall.

They will hike rain or shine. People should be prepared for winter conditions, snow and ice gear recommended. Well behaved dogs on leash are welcome. Maps and bottled water will be provided.

People should register per car load by visiting <https://westernmasshilltownhikers.ticketleap.com>. Suggestion donation is \$10, hike is volunteer lead.

More details are available by visiting www.hilltownhikers.com. People may email westernmasshilltownhikers@aol.com or call/text 413-302-0312 if they have any questions.



A roomful of diners at Middlefield’s Blossom Center enjoy a spaghetti dinner put on by Scout Troop 120 of Chester. Submitted photo

Boy Scouts serve up spaghetti

CHESTER – Boy Scout Troop 120 fed a roomful of diners at their fundraising dinner held Saturday, Dec 9, at Middlefield’s Blossom Center. Scouts

on hand to help included: James, Avery W, Josh and Wesley Daningburg, Jackson and Dan Harding, and Noralee Shirley.

EARLY DEADLINE For All Advertising & CLASSIFIEDS

All Papers Will Deadline Thursday, Dec. 21 at Noon for Publication Dec. 25-29	:	All Papers Will Deadline Thursday, Dec. 28 at Noon for Publication Jan. 1-5
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happy new year!

WEDDING



David & Molly Wakeling

EASTHAMPTON – David Wakeling and Molly Blewett were married Oct. 12, 2023 in Nahant.

The groom is the son of Tim and Karen Wakeling of Easthampton and the bride is the daughter of Mary Ellen Rose and Richard Blewett of Gloucester. David is the grandson of Connie and Bob Dragon of Westhampton.

The groom graduated from the Art Institute of Charleston and is a restaurant owner in Utah. The bride is a graduate of the University of Utah in psychology and works in luxury hospitality. They are presently living in the U.K.

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DISCOVER

GOSHEN

Community supports re-imagine Goshen Center Project

GOSHEN – In October, Goshen residents and landowners received a mailing of the recently printed brochure, which describes the project, includes the mission statement and provides information on how to donate or volunteer for this exciting project.

This mailing generated donations and inquiries about volunteering. On Sunday, Nov. 12, a brisk and sunny afternoon, an enthusiastic crowd gathered in the Goshen Town Hall for Bingo. This event was hosted by the Open Space Committee as a fundraiser for the Re-imagine Goshen Center project. Thanks to the generous community sponsors with donations of gift cards, as well as many hand-crafted items, the revenue generated from the Bingo games, raffle and 50/50 surpassed projections. They raised \$1,779. Thank you to everyone who donated in support of this fundraiser.

The hand-crafted quilt, displayed in various locations, including the Bingo event, generated a lot of interest.

On Monday, Dec. 11, a group of Goshen residents gathered in the town office for the quilt raffle drawing. The full/queen size quilt with a log cabin pattern, was pieced and donated by Lorraine Brisson and professionally quilted by Sue's Quilt Studio, Chester, Vermont. With much anticipation, the winning ticket was selected. The raffle winner was Kathy Heminway, of Ellington, Connecticut. This fundraiser raised \$1,291. The quilt for next year is already being pieced together.

The mission of the project is to create a vibrant town center that provides a recreational, cultural, and social gathering place that welcomes people of all ages and abilities; promotes communi-

ty pride through beautification of our town center and provides a landscape to encourage physical activity and social gatherings.

This project is intended to create a town center that will invite a sense of place, pride, social cohesion, and community engagement. It will stimulate economic activity and enhance Goshen's Main Street corridor, while transforming Goshen from a drive-through community to a destination and community hub.

New infrastructure will include building a timber frame pavilion and creating a town green in the area previously occupied by the tennis court. The area bound by the parking lot, Route 9 and the entrance to the senior housing, will undergo a major renovation, converting the area into a multi-faceted park. New elements will include stone walls and a patio constructed of Goshen indigenous stone, café tables, park benches, tree and shrub plantings, pollinator gardens, a brick walkway, refurbished memorials and a wrought iron archway at the park entrance.

The Open Space Committee extends its gratitude to all the sponsors, donors and volunteers, who have supported this exciting project. We look forward to future collaborations with community members. The project will cost in excess of \$300,000, and while the project has community preservation funding, every donation helps.

To learn more about the Re-imagine Goshen Center project, people may visit the website at www.goshen-ma.us/departments/open-space-committee/. For questions or to volunteer, people may email reimaginesoshen01032@gmail.com.



Russell Laroche of AcuFab Iron Works, Inc. presents a \$500 check to Lorraine Brisson in support of the Re-imagine Goshen Center project.



Lorraine Brisson selects the winning ticket for the quilt raffle while Allison Bowen holds the jar.



An enthusiastic group play Bingo in the Goshen Town Hall on Sunday, Nov. 12.

Submitted photos

Goshen Council on Aging announces upcoming events

GOSHEN – The Goshen Council on Aging is going to try something different this month and have the luncheon at the Williamsburg Snack Bar on Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 11:30 a.m.

People will meet there at 11:30 a.m., note different time and join together for a lunch of their choice from their menu. People should call Kerry Normandin at 413-268-9354 by Wednesday, Jan. 3 so the COA can let the restaurant know how many to expect. Suggested five dollar donation is appreciated.

Pearl Woodward is the newest owner of Goshen's Golden Scepter, our version of the Boston Post Cane. She is now the oldest person living in Goshen, with her 100th birthday coming up on Jan. 19. This honor was celebrated at a small family gathering in December. Pearl was presented with a framed certificate, flowers and the Golden Scepter by members of the select board and COA board. This tradition continues as a show of honor and respect.

On Wednesday, Jan. 3 the Knitting and Crafts Group meets in the upstairs Dining Room at the Goshen Town Hall

from 1-3 p.m. Occasionally, they meet in the library so check in there, too. Participants should bring whatever craft or needlework project they are working on. The group members have experience in knitting, crocheting, sewing and more so bring any questions to the group and problem solve together.

On Friday, Jan. 5 Community Connections Group meets from 10-11 a.m. in the dining room on the second floor of the Town Hall. This month they will be joined by Lynne Paterson, owner of Prakasa Yoga and Wellness Studio in Goshen, who will be sharing information about her comprehensive holistic program to heal chronic back pain naturally. Paterson has written a book outlining her tips and strategies for spinal alignment and she will bring copies of her book to purchase.

On Tuesdays, Jan. 9, 16, 23, and 30 Tai Chi class will continue with instructor Richard Larson at 9 a.m. in the Goshen Town Hall. He will be teaching the Eight Ways. The slow, repetitive movements are good for the body and the mind. People should wear comfortable

clothing and supportive shoes. All abilities are welcome and they can modify the approaches as needed so that everyone can benefit.

In person exercise class continues with Joan Griswold on Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. in the Goshen Town Hall. People should wear supportive footwear and bring water and free weights if they have them. There is a brief health questionnaire Griswold will have people fill out. This class is also offered simultaneously on Zoom, so if people prefer this method, they may email Joan for the link at joan@bybhealth.com. Joan also sends out informative emails and has classes on zoom each day of the week if people can't make Wednesdays.

On Tuesdays, Jan. 16 and 23 Highland Valley Elder Service lunch is served. The HVES lunch is on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month, with pick up from noon-12:30 p.m. The menu for January is not available yet, but people can call Kerry and she will be able to let them know the choices. If they have not signed up and would like to for February, they may call Kerry

Normandin at 413-268-9354 to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$3 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.

On Wednesday, Jan. 17 Games Group will be from 1-3 p.m. and continue on the third Wednesday of each month. They meet in the dining room on the second floor of Town Hall, and occasionally in the library.

The COA needs one more board member. They are a fun group and they strive to support all the seniors in town. Contact any member for more information.

One goal of this program is to lend durable medical equipment that people may need on a short or long term basis. Before going out to purchase items like walkers, tub seats or commodes, people may call Henrietta Munroe, program leader at 413-268-7465 as they may just have what one needs for free.

As winter begins, if the Hampshire Regional School District is closed, any Council on Aging programming that day will be canceled.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Christopher Williams inducted into pharmacy honor society

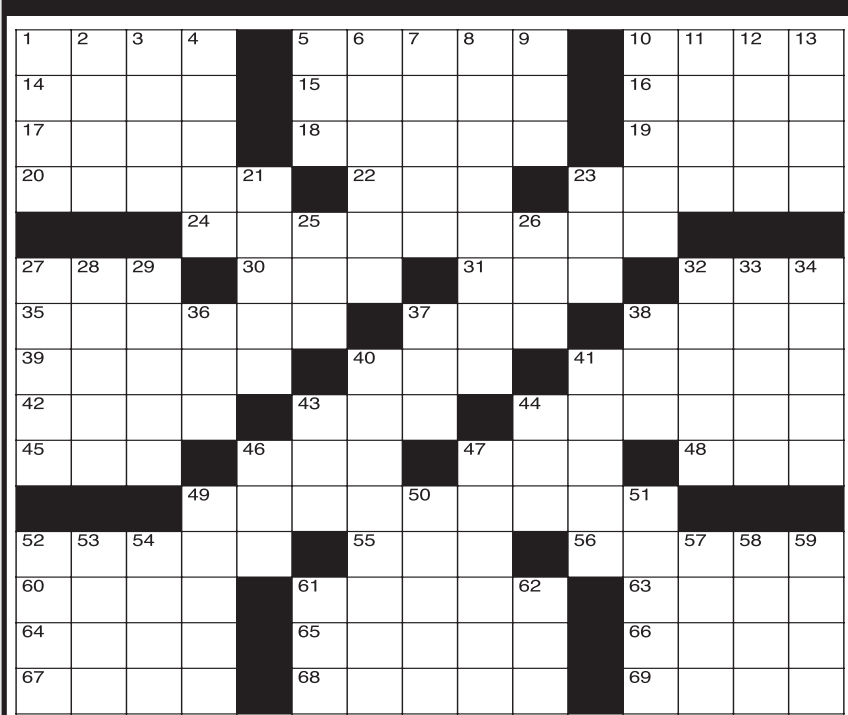
SPRINGFIELD – Epsilon Iota, the Western New England University chapter of Rho Chi Pharmacy Honor Society, celebrated the induction of nine outstanding

members from the PY3 Pharmacy Class at an event held on Thursday, Nov. 16, at the Munich Haus in Chicopee. Local student, Christopher Williams

of Easthampton, was one of the inductees into the society.

The Rho Chi Society, established in 1922, is an international honor soci-

ety dedicated to fostering high scholastic achievement, fellowship among students in pharmacy and the promotion of pharmaceutical sciences.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Droops
- 5. Subatomic particle
- 10. Not in danger
- 14. Nursemaid
- 15. Black band worn in mourning
- 16. Long song in opera
- 17. Edible seed of a Philippine tree
- 18. Chicago political family
- 19. Pursues pleasure from one place to another
- 20. Appetizer
- 22. Hill (Celtic)
- 23. Simple shoe
- 24. Songs to one you love
- 27. Secret activities
- 30. Upset
- 31. Popular hot drink
- 32. Body art (slang)
- 35. Fired
- 37. Blood relation
- 38. Identical
- 39. Porticos
- 40. Partner to cheese
- 41. Type of sword

- 42. Enough (archaic)
- 43. Surface layer of ground
- 44. Cotton fabric woven like satin
- 45. Choose for a post
- 46. Father
- 47. Tell on
- 48. Indian title of respect
- 49. Fonts
- 52. Fencing sword
- 55. Mock
- 56. Vaccine developer
- 60. Atmosphere surrounding a person or place
- 61. Marten with a short tail
- 63. Chinese temple
- 64. Invests in little enterprises
- 65. Popular cut of meat
- 66. Charity
- 67. Iron-containing compound
- 68. River in Northern Europe
- 69. One point east of southeast

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Exhausts
- 2. Genus of fish related to gars
- 3. Impudent behavior
- 4. Adherents to Islam
- 5. They come after A
- 6. Spoke
- 7. Room to receive guests
- 8. About opera
- 9. End-blown flute
- 10. Heroic tales
- 11. Member of a Semitic people
- 12. Dog's name
- 13. Opposite of west
- 21. Political divisions in ancient Greece
- 23. Ocean
- 25. Cool!
- 26. Young woman about to enter society
- 27. One from central Caucasus
- 28. Indian city
- 29. A way to serve ice cream
- 32. Emaciation
- 33. Escort aircraft carrier
- 34. Italian city
- 36. Mythical settler of Kansas
- 37. Unhappy
- 38. High schoolers' test
- 40. Measured in pace
- 41. Satisfies
- 43. Gullible person
- 44. Enclosed space
- 46. Substance used to color something
- 47. Shirt type
- 49. Discover by investigation
- 50. _-Castell, makers of pens
- 51. Semitic Sun god
- 52. Grads wear one
- 53. French river
- 54. Part of a cap
- 57. Digestive fluid
- 58. Metrical foot
- 59. Body part
- 61. Very fast airplane
- 62. Supplement with difficulty

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

This week you may be interested in unusual art forms or creative things in nature, Aries. Therefore, try to enjoy outings that may bring you to exhibits by local artists or craft shows.

CANCER

Jun 22/Jul 22

New career opportunities are available to reawaken your ambition, Cancer. You might come across some possibilities this week that you hadn't imagined.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

This week you may learn something new that you never realized about your spouse or current partner, Libra. It can be exciting realizing wonderful things about the one you love.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

Welcomed, but unexpected communications from a close friend could come your way. This may segue into a journey or some social occasion.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

An old friend may come to visit for the holidays and you can rekindle your relationship after many years. Even though it's been some time, you'll be glad to see one another.

LEO

Jul 23/Aug 23

The excitement of making arrangements for a journey may actually excite you more than the trip itself. However, once you get to the destination, your enthusiasm will grow.

SCORPIO

Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, exciting new developments will arise in your career. A solution may come to light or plans you've been making will suddenly come to fruition.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, you may desire to keep your distance from certain individuals, but they manage to find you anyway. Keep things cordial until you can once again move on.

GEMINI

May 22/Jun 21

An unexpected invitation comes your way, Gemini. It may include a short trip to visit someone or a brief vacation to a place you've always wanted to see.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

After a visit from a friend or family member who you haven't seen in a while, long-forgotten memories are recalled. This will be an interesting trip down memory lane.

SAGITTARIUS

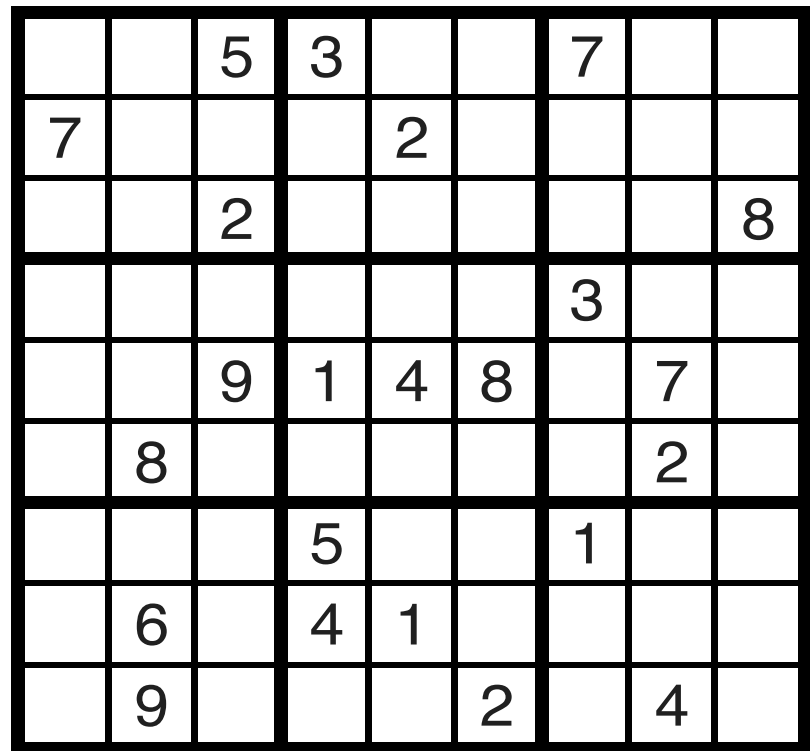
Nov 23/Dec 21

Your desire to travel may have awakened a new interest in you, Sagittarius. This could inspire you to make plans to visit far off lands in the year to come.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

You are receptive to new ideas, Pisces, and that may mean you could relocate for a new and promising career. Keep all of your options open.



SUDOKU

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

answers

S	W	L	V	K	A	V	L	S	C	O	I	B	S			
O	V	I	W	E	L	E	V	S	V	R	N	V	A			
N	I	N	A	B	I	S	G	V	R	F	E	A	B	A	R	S
T	E	S	F	A	C	E	F	E	T	Y	C	E	F	E	T	R
I	R	S	T	A	T	A	V	D	D	V	D	F	T	V	A	T
N	E	E	T	L	S	O	S	M	O	N	E	S				
E	R	E	V	S	C	O	F	E	M	S	V	O	L	S		
E	W	V	S	B	I	S	C	K	C	V	S					
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PITTSFIELD

Berkshire Green Drinks host presentation

PITTSFIELD – The first Berkshire Green Drinks of 2024 will feature John Pitroff, the owner of Second Chance Composting.

This free hybrid event is taking place on Wednesday, Jan. 10, online via Zoom and in person at The Barn of Williams Inn, located at 103 Spring St. in Williamstown. The in-person social gathering begins at 5 p.m. and the presentation and Zoom meeting start at 6 p.m.

Delve into the comprehensive world of composting as Pitroff illuminates both residential and commercial aspects, addressing what materials can or cannot be composted and the underlying reasons. Engage in a thoughtful exploration of common concerns surrounding composting, gaining insights into the intricacies of the composting process and the importance of composting on a localized and broader scale. He will also share how Second Chance Composting contributes to community building and endeavors to make composting accessible to all. Don't miss this enlightening discussion at the intersection of environmental awareness and sustainable practices.

People should visit <https://tinyurl.com/Jan2024-Berks-Green-Drinks> to learn more and to RSVP.

John Pitroff started Second Chance

Composting in June 2022 and has worked tirelessly to make composting available and a top priority in the Berkshires. In 16 months, his company has diverted 377,329 pounds of material from the landfill, including 124,686 pounds of food scraps. John is also the alternative commissioner for the Town of Adams Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District, a 2022 Graduate of the Vermont Compost Operator Certification Program, and the 2023 Massachusetts MassRecycle Individual Award winner.

Berkshire Green Drinks, formerly Pittsfield Green Drinks, is an informal gathering that takes place once a month. A guest speaker talks for about 30 minutes beginning at 6 p.m. and the presentation is followed by a discussion and question and answer. These nights are free and open to everyone with any environmental interest. The drinks aren't green, but the conversations are. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join and bring along questions.

Berkshire Green Drinks is sponsored and organized by the Berkshire Environmental Action Team. For more information regarding Berkshire Green Drinks, people may email Chelsey Simmons at chelsey@thebeatnews.org or call 413-464-9402.

NORTHAMPTON

Forbes Library list upcoming events

NORTHAMPTON – Forbes Library, 20 West St., host drop in tech help Mondays and Fridays from 4-5:30 p.m. and Tuesday from 2-3:30 p.m.

Anyone, who needs a little help using a computer or tech device, may drop-in for a help session. They may bring their device or use on of the library's computers to have their questions answered by a knowledgeable volunteer. For more scheduling options, people may make a one-on-one appointment with a library staff member by calling 413-587-1011

Dungeons and Dragons Club for Kids will meet Thursday, Dec. 21 from 3:45-5:15 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons is held every other Thursday at 3:45 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons is a great way for children to practice collaboration, strategy and storytelling, and all experience levels are welcomed. This program is for children ages 9 plus and is limited to six participants per session. Registration is required by calling the Children's Desk at 413-587-1010 or visit in person to sign up.

A program on How to Draw Pokémon is presented by Pop Up

Art School on Friday, Dec. 29 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Participants will learn how to draw your favorite Pokémon characters including Pikachu! Pop Up Art School will show you how to draw step-by-step using basic shapes and easy to follow instructions. Registration is required. This event is limited to 15 people for ages 7 to 12.

Hospice Lecture Series – From Start to Finish, Understanding Home Health Care (Hybrid)

On Wednesday, Jan. 3 from 6-7:30 p.m. the library will hold "Making the Right Choice. Learn the Options for Home Health Care" in person in the Coolidge Museum or watch the livestream via YouTube

When facing serious illness, understanding healthcare options can be confusing and overwhelming. Trying to understand the differences between VNA, Palliative Care, and Hospice can lead to many questions. This program will break down what each service is while discussing the importance of advance care planning so they are in control of their own care. The program is presented by Cooley Dickinson VNA and Hospice.

PUBLIC NOTICES

TOWN OF BLANDFORD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Blandford Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing at the Blandford Town Hall, 1 Russell Stage Road, Blandford, MA 01008 at **6:00 PM on January 10, 2024**. The nature of this hearing is to amend Blandford Zoning Bylaws by adding Section XVI, Battery Energy Storage Systems.

Copies of the proposed amendment to the Zoning Bylaws may be found at townofblandford.com or in the Office of the Town Clerk. Anyone wishing information and/or to be heard on these matters should appear at the time and place designated.

Paul Martin, Chair Blandford Planning Board 12/21, 12/28/2023

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of

Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Robert T. Briand and Maura A. Gamache to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Full Spectrum Lending, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated February 11, 2004 and recorded with the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds at Book 7694, Page 45, subsequently assigned to The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the benefit of the Certificateholders of the CWABS Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2004-3 by Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. by assignment recorded in said Hampshire County Registry of Deeds at Book 10905, Page 217 for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 AM on December 28, 2023** at 40 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA, all and singular the prem-

ises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

That parcel of land located on the Southwesterly side of the highway from Norwich Bridge to Littleville sometimes called the North Chester Road, in said Huntington, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning in an iron pin set in the Southwesterly line of said highway at the Southeasterly corner of the track herein conveyed, it being the Northeasterly corner on said highway of land now or formerly of Guy A. Fist Estate,

thence running Southwesterly along land of said Estate of Guy A. Fist, two hundred thirty-eight feet, four inches, more or less, to an iron pin at a corner;

thence running Northwesterly along land of said Estate of Guy A. Fist, two hundred forty-eight, five inches, more or less, to an iron pin at a corner;

thence running Northeasterly along said land of the Estate of Guy

A. Fist, ninety-seven feet, six inches, more or less, to an iron pin at a corner,

thence running Northeasterly one hundred thirty-eight feet, three inches, more or less, along other land of this grantor, Elsie M. LaFond, in a straight line, to an iron pin located on said Southwesterly side of the highway, Northwesterly of the point of beginning;

thence running Southeasterly along the line of said highway, three hundred eighty-nine feet, four inches, more or less, to the point of beginning.

Subject to easement to New England Telephone & Telegraph Company dated July 19, 1937 and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 926, Page 139 if applicable. For our Title see Deed of Robert T. Briand to Robert T. Birand and Maura A. Gamache dated June 1, 2001, recorded on June 1, 2001 at Hampshire Registry of Deeds, Book 6231, Page 69. The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of

all easements, restrictions, encroachments, building and zoning laws, liens, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession, and attorney's fees and costs.

TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by writ-

ten or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the benefit of the Certificateholders of the CWABS Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2004-3

Present Holder of said Mortgage,

By Its Attorneys, ORLANS PC

PO Box 540540

Waltham, MA 02454

Phone: (781) 790-7800
22-004385

12/07, 12/14, 12/21/2023

Early Deadlines

for all LEGAL NOTICES...

All Papers Will Deadline Thursday, Dec. 21 at Noon for Publication Dec. 25-29

Happy Holidays!

Happy New Year!

All Papers Will Deadline Thursday, Dec. 28 at Noon for Publication Jan. 1-5

Country Journal

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

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HILLTOWN HIKING ADVENTURES



A line of Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers walk along a section of trail with planks to walk upon.



Several hikers took their dogs on a recent hike along the York Lake Loop Trail in the Sandisfield State Forest.



The hiker in the middle runs across the boards.



There was snow on the edge of the trail.

Submitted photos

Hikers trek on York Lake Loop Trail

SANDISFIELD – The Western Massachusetts Hilltown Hikers December group hike Saturday was at the 9,500 acre Sandisfield State Forest on the York Lake Loop Trail built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the great depression.

York Lake is a shallow 35 acre man-made lake at 1,544 feet of elevation. It is fed by Sandy Brook, a tributary of the Farmington and Connecticut Rivers. This water eventually flows a distance of 115 miles where it empties into Long Island Sound.

It was named for Samuel A. York, a gentleman farmer of Cummington, who served as Commissioner of the Department of Conservation from

1933-35. The land here was originally farmland and part of one of the original settlements of Western Massachusetts known as township number three, Sandisfield was incorporated in 1762.

Most of the farmers here left for the West after the Civil War for better farmland. This abandoned land as most of the State Forests today, was reforested by the Civilian Conservation Corps. They created areas like York Lake for outdoor recreation.

In 1933 to 1936, 200 men were stationed here in camp 196 Company to work for a dollar a day. They built roads, controlled insect infestation, built fire ponds, and reforested the land with Norway spruce and red pine.

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